

REMARKS

Claims 2, 4-16 and 19-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Anderson et al. (US 6,022,825). Claims 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '825 patent for the same reasons as applied under the 102(b) rejection.

Claim 3 is allowable but is objected to.

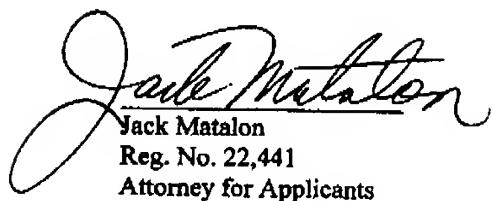
In response to these rejections, claim 2 has been canceled and claim 31 has been amended to recite that the Group IIa metal oxide is selected from the group consisting of magnesium oxide, calcium oxide and strontium oxide. It is respectfully submitted that in addition to the failure of the '825 reference to disclose the use of strontium oxide as an additive effective for the suppression of hydrogen sulfide, the reference also fails to disclose the use of either magnesium oxide or calcium oxide as such an additive.

The '825 reference consistently states that the additive effective for suppression of hydrogen sulfide contains a metal oxide selected from the group consisting of barium oxide, cobalt oxide, iron oxide, manganese oxide and nickel oxide, with nickel oxide being preferred (see column 3, lines 41-44; column 3, lines 45-50; column 3, lines 53-58; column 4, lines 34-37; column 5, lines 63-65; column 6, lines 6-9; column 10, lines 27-29; column 11, lines 1-2; and column 12, lines 5-7. Therefore, the use of magnesium oxide or calcium oxide as a hydrogen sulfide suppressant in the present invention is also allowable for the same reasons as the Examiner has concluded in respect to strontium oxide.

By way of summary, it is clear that amended claim 31 with its limitations therein taken with the remarks set forth above detail why amended claim 31 is neither anticipated by nor deemed unpatentable by the '825 reference. Since amended claim 31 is now allowable, it follows that the remainder of the claims (which are dependent claims) are also allowable. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be re-examined and promptly passed to issue forthwith.

In order to advance this application to allowance, applicants' attorney would welcome a telephone discussion with the Examiner if the Examiner still feels that this response does not place the application in condition for allowance. Applicants' attorney may be reached at (973) 467-5626.

Respectfully submitted,



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